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explorer Baron von der Decken had not lost both his steamers, as had been rumoured. It appeared that his small steamer was lost on the bar of the Jub, but that the other had been preserved and repaired. The party had advanced up that river to a considerable distance, and, when last heard of, were preparing to proceed on their land journey into the interior. They were in high spirits and in good health, and there was reason to hope that with so very enterprising a leader and so many appliances the expedition would be ultimately successful.

The following Papers were read:—

1. *A Boat-voyage along the Coast-lakes of East Madagascar.*

By CAPTAIN W. ROOKE, R.A.

CAPTAIN ROOKE related that having heard, whilst at Mauritius in 1864, that the chain of lakes south of Tamatave, in Madagascar, might be traversed for several hundred miles in a boat sufficiently light to be carried over the short portages, he determined to attempt their exploration. He had a boat constructed especially for the journey, and, with three companions and a native crew, started for the northern commencement of the lakes in the month of April. The whole journey from north to south occupied the party thirty-two days, during which they travelled nearly 400 miles, partly over lakes of larger or smaller dimensions, but chiefly along winding channels and streams which connected the lakes together. The chain of lakes and channels occupies a belt of low land along the coast, and is sometimes separated from the sea only by banks of sand. The large rivers which descend from the highlands of the interior are connected with the network on reaching the low belt of coast-land. During the journey the travellers passed numerous villages and several larger towns, each of about 1000 inhabitants; their voyage terminating at Manzanari. They were well received by the Hova governors; they saw very little cultivated land, and the inhabitants seemed an indolent and improvident, but good-humoured race. The banks of most of the winding channels and lakes were clothed with magnificent tropical vegetation, which in the narrow watercourses arched overhead and added much to the beauty of the scenery. At Manzanari they saw several individuals of the Akongo tribe, whose territory lies towards the south, and who have succeeded in maintaining their independence against the Hovas. Their capital is several days' journey south-west of Manzanari, and is situated on a high hill, the sides of which have been escarped for the purposes of defence.

This paper will be printed in the 'Journal,' vol. xxxvi.
